

Message Text

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SUBJECT: INTSUM 254 - FEBRUARY 15, 1977

WARNING NOTICE SENSITIVE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED NOT
RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS--NOT RELEASABLE TO
CONTRACTORS OR CONTRACTOR/CONSULTANTS.

1. LEBANON. SYRIAN TROOPS AND TANKS SEALED OFF
PALESTINIAN CAMPS IN SOUTHERN BEIRUT YESTERDAY AMID
REPORTS OF AN IMMINENT CRACKDOWN ON THE GUERRILLAS THERE.
A PALESTINIAN RADIO BROADCAST WARNED THAT ANY ATTEMPT BY
THE ASF IN LEBANON TO ENTER THE CAMPS WOULD LEAD TO SERIOUS
CONSEQUENCES. ALL FATAH LEAVES WERE CANCELLED, AND FATAH
MEMBERS WERE ORDERED TO REMAIN IN POSITION.

2. ARAFAT HAS CUT SHORT HIS VISIT TO GUINEA AND RETURNED
TO CAIRO. HE WAS REPORTEDLY ASKED BY THE PLO LEADERSHIP
TO RETURN TO PREVENT A FURTHER DETERIORATION OF THE
SITUATION IN LEBANON. ARAFAT MET WITH SADAT AND SENT MESSA-
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GES TO THE SAUDIS AND THE SYRIANS. IN HIS MESSAGE TO ASAD,
ARAFAT ASKED THAT ANY PLANS FOR MILITARY ACTION AGAINST THE
PLO BE STOPPED.

3. REUTER QUOTES EYEWITNESSES AS SAYING THAT THE SYRIANS
HAVE PULLED BACK FROM NABATIYA. THE SYRIANS ARE RE-
PORTEDLY NOW LOCATED AT HABBOUCH, ONE MILE NORTHWEST OF

NABATIYA, HAITOURA, ABOUT 10 MILES NORTH, AND AYSHIYAH FIVE MILES NORTHEAST. OUR BEIRUT DEFENSE ATTACHE REPORTED THAT SMALL 10-12 MAN UNITS OF THE LEBANESE INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES (ISF) WERE SCHEDULED TO MOVE TO NABATIYA FEBRUARY 14 TO REPLACE THE SYRIANS. (SECRET/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT)

4. ISRAEL. DESPITE THE SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL, THE ISRAELIS ARE STILL CONCERNED OVER THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. AN EDITORIAL IN THE JERUSALEM POST ASSERTED THAT THE NABATIYA CRISIS STILL APPEARS FAR FROM RESOLVED. THE EDITORIAL OBSERVES THAT THE KEY PROBLEM IS THE DEFINITION OF THE "RED LINE" IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. THE SYRIANS HAVE INDICATED THEY HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE "RED LINE" RUNS ALONG THE LITANI RIVER. ISRAEL HAS NEVER DEMARCATED THE LINE PUBLICLY, BUT, ACCORDING TO THE EDITORIAL, IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED TO STRETCH APPROXIMATELY FROM SIDON TO JAZZIN.

5. THE EDITORIAL ALSO SAYS THERE IS THE ISSUE OF THE PLO FORCES, "WHOM THE SYRIANS HAVE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN A NUMBER OF SOUTHERN BASTIONS...INCLUDING THE ANCIENT CRUSADER FORTRESS OF BEAUFORT." ISRAELI OFFICIALS ALSO REPORTEDLY VIEW WITH CONCERN THE INTRODUCTION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON OF THE VANGUARDS OF THE LEBANESE ARMY (A SYRIAN-CONTROLLED LEBANESE ARMY FACTION) BECAUSE THESE UNITS ARE NOT UNDER THE TOTAL CONTROL OF THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT.

6. TODAY'S CONVICTION OF SENIOR HISTADRUT AND LABOR PARTY
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FIGURE ASHER YADLIN ON BRIBERY, CONSPIRACY, FRAUD, AND TAX VIOLATIONS IS LIKELY TO DAMAGE LABOR'S PROSPECTS IN THE FORTHCOMING KNESSET ELECTION AND WILL PROBABLY HURT RABIN IN HIS CONTEST WITH PERES. YADLIN NOT ONLY ADMITTED HIS GUILT BUT STATED THAT HE HAD PASSED MONEY TO FINANCE MINISTER RABINOWITZ AND EDUCATION MINISTER AHARON YADLIN, WHEN THE TWO MINISTERS WERE KEY PARTY FUNCTIONARIES (CHAIRMAN OF THE LABOR PARTY FINANCE COMMITTEE AND SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PARTY, RESPECTIVELY). ASHER YADLIN ASSERTED THAT RABINOWITZ, AMONG OTHERS, HAD PRESURED HIM INTO SOLICITING FUNDS FOR THE LABOR PARTY BEFORE THE 1973 ELECTION.

7. THE ULTIMATE RAMIFICATIONS AND IMPACT OF WHAT IS DEVELOPING INTO THE SECOND GREATEST SCANDAL IN ISRAELI HISTORY (AFTER THE "LAVON AFFAIR") CANNOT YET BE ENTIRELY FORESEEN. YADLIN'S CHARGES WILL AT THE VERY LEAST, FURTHER BLACKEN LABOR'S TARNISHED IMAGE. THEY WILL ALSO INTENSIFY PRESSURE FOR A MORE THOROUGH INVESTIGATION INTO

LABOR PARTY FINANCES AND INTO THE POSSIBILITY THAT RABINOWITZ, AHARON YADLIN, AND OTHERS HAVE COMMITTED ILLEGAL ACTS.

8. ACCORDING TO AP, INFORMED SOURCES HAVE SAID ISRAELI OFFICIALS MAY REVIVE THEIR PROPOSAL FOR MORE INTERIM BILATERAL AGREEMENTS WITH ARAB CONFRONTATION STATES ("STEP-BY-STEP" NEGOTIATIONS). ISRAEL WOULD BE WILLING TO EXCHANGE SOME OF THE TERRITORY IT OCCUPIES FOR "NO-WAR" AGREEMENTS WITH INDIVIDUAL ARAB STATES. THESE SOURCES SAID THAT ISRAELI LEADERS HAVE STATED PRIVATELY THAT TALK OF A RECONVENED GENEVA CONFERENCE IS "UNREALISTIC," GIVEN THE ARAB LEADERS' INSISTENCE THAT THE PLO PARTICIPATE.

9. FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTRY SECRETARY GENERAL SOUTOU COMMENTED TO AMBASSADOR RUSH THAT HE CONSIDERS FRANCE-
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ISRAELI RELATIONS TO BE BACK TO NORMAL NOW. ACCORDING TO SOUTOU, ONE FACTOR WHICH HELPED BILATERAL RELATIONS WAS THE SAUDI-FRENCH COMMUNIQUE AFTER PRESIDENT GISCARD'S VISIT, WHICH WAS WELL RECEIVED BY THE ISRAELIS. SOUTOU HOPED THAT GUIRINGAUD'S VISIT TO ISRAEL WOULD TAKE PLACE LATER THIS MONTH. (SECRET)

10. EGYPT. EMBASSY CAIRO NOTED THAT, IN HIS RECENT PRESS CONFERENCE WITH WEST GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER, SADAT STATED DIRECTLY THAT EGYPT IS READY TO END THE STATE OF WAR AND RESTORE "NORMAL RELATIONS" WITH ISRAEL WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A FINAL PEACE. THE EMBASSY COMMENTED THAT THE PHASE WAS PRESUMABLY CAREFULLY CHOSEN, AND AS SUCH REPRESENTS A FUNDAMENTAL AND SIGNIFICANT ADVANCE IN SADAT'S THINKING. THE REMARK STRONGLY IMPLIES THE KIND OF RELATIONS THAT ISRAEL ENVISAGES AS PART OF A FINAL SETTLEMENT.

11. ACCORDING TO REUTER, AN ESTIMATED 400 STUDENTS AT CAIRO UNIVERSITY DEMONSTRATED YESTERDAY, SHOUTING ANTI-GOVERNMENT SLOGANS. FIGHTING REPORTEDLY ERUPTED SUNDAY BETWEEN RIVAL STUDENT GROUPS ON THE CAMPUS. THIS IS THE THIRD DAY OF STUDENT UNREST AT THE UNIVERSITY.

12. EGYPT'S PARLIAMENT YESTERDAY EXPELLED KAMAL EDDIN HUSSEIN, A FORMER VICE PRESIDENT, WHO PUBLICLY DESCRIBED THE TOUGH NEW LAW AND ORDER MEASURES OF SADAT AS "AN INSULT TO THE INTELLIGENCE OF THE EGYPTIAN PEOPLE." SUCH ACTIONS WILL PARTLY SHUT THE POLITICAL OPEN DOOR AND IS LIKELY TO STIFLE RECENTLY EVIDENT CRITICISM OF THE REGIME.

13. AMOCO'S EGYPT MANAGER INFORMED EMBASSY CAIRO THAT AN ISRAELI GUNBOAT HAD INTERCEPTED AN AMOCO WORK BOAT ON MONDAY WHICH WAS IN THE PROCESS OF SETTING AN ANCHOR FOR A NEW AMOCO RIG IN THE SOUTHERN GULF OF SUEZ AREA.

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THE ISRAELIS DEPARTED AFTER ORDERING THE AMOCO BOAT TO LEAVE, BUT THE BOAT REMAINED ON LOCATION. THE AMOCO REPRESENTATIVE SAID THE RIG WAS BEING PLACED WEST OF THE SUEZ MEDIAN LINE. (CONFIDENTIAL)

14. PALESTINIAN. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE YESTERDAY ISRAELI DOVE MATTI PELED SAID THAT PLO REPRESENTATIVES HAD TOLD HIM THE PLO WAS READY TO ACCEPT ALL BUT ONE OF THE TERMS OF UN RESOLUTION 242. THE PALESTINIANS STILL OPPOSE THE TERM "REFUGEE," SINCE THEY DESIRE RECOGNITION AS A NATION. PELED ADDED THAT HE FELT THE PLO MIGHT AMEND THE PALESTINE NATIONAL CHARTER'S CALL FOR A CONTINUED "WAR AGAINST ZIONISM" IF THE US OFFERED THE PALESTINIANS "SOME ENCOURAGEMENT." HOWEVER, A PALESTINIAN SPOKESMAN DENIED PELED'S CLAIMS TODAY AND SAID THAT NO MEETINGS HAD TAKEN PLACE BETWEEN THE PLO AND PELED'S ORGANIZATION. (UNCLASSIFIED)

15. IRAQ-SOVIETS. THE RECENT MOSCOW VISIT OF IRAQI STRONGMAN SADDAM HUSAYN PROBABLY MARKED THE FINALIZATION OR REFINEMENT OF THE ESTIMATED \$1.2 BILLION ARMS SALE AGREED IN PRINCIPLE DURING KOSYGIN'S VISIT TO BAGHDAD LAST MAY. THE BENEFITS TO THE SOVIETS FROM THE IRAQI RELATIONSHIP ARE GREAT ENOUGH THAT WE WOULD EXPECT THEM TO CONTINUE TO SELL ARMS DESPITE DIFFERENCES OVER THE ARAB-ISRAEL ISSUE AND IRAQI TREATMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNISTS. (SECRET/NOFORN)
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